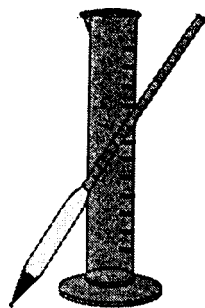# ATTENTION
All organizations interested in submitting a proposals for monitoring projects under the Long Island Sound Study Small Grants Program
You must obtain an approved Quality Assurance Project Plan

The Volunteer Monitor s Guide to Quality Assurance Project Plans

The Quality Assurance Project Plan, or QAPP is a written document that outlines the procedures a monitoring project will use to ensure that the samples participants collect and analyze, the data they store and manage, and the reports they write are of high enough quality to meet project needs.

US Environmental Protection Agency(EPA) funded monitoring programs including those funded under the Long Island Sound Study Small Grants Program must have an EPA approved QAPP before sample collection begins. However, even programs that do not receive EPA money should consider developing a QAPP, especially if data might be used by state, federal, or local resource managers. A QAPP helps the data user and monitoring project leaders ensure that the collected data meet their needs and that the quality control steps needed to verify this are built into the project from the beginning.

Volunteer monitoring programs have long recognized the importance of well-designed monitoring projects; written field, lab, and data management protocols; trained volunteers; and effective presentation of results. Relatively few programs, however, have tackled the task of preparing a comprehensive QAPP that documents these important elements.

EPA has developed a guidebook entitled *The Volunteer Monitor's Guide to Quality Assurance Project Plans*. This guidebook is designed to help volunteer program coordinators develop such a QAPP.

Developing a QAPP is a dynamic, interactive process that should ideally involve State and EPA Regional quality assurance experts, potential data users, and key members of the volunteer monitoring project. There are 11 steps a volunteer monitoring project coordinator might take to prepare a QAPP. Also, according to EPA guidance, 24 distinct elements can be included in a QAPP, although not all elements may be necessary for all programs. Which elements you end up including in your QAPP depends on your project's goals, objectives, scope, data uses, and on the guidance you receive from the EPA Regional quality assurance contact.

It is strongly recommended that you obtain a copy of *The Volunteer Monitor's Guide* to hep you with your QAPP. For information on how to obtain a copy visit the EPA web site at:
www.epa.gov/volunteer/qappcovr.htm